



Documentary Alliance

Working toward high quality,
creative documentary production,
supported by Screen Ireland.

February 2021



In early 2021, the Documentary Alliance of the Screen Directors Guild (SDGI) plans to meet with Screen Ireland (SI). Below are points of discussion from the Documentary Alliance about how Screen Ireland can further support the diversity and quality of documentary storytelling for the screen.

01 **Increase the Documentary fund to 2M**

- The current fund is not sufficient and has hardly increased in the last number of years.

- This is unsatisfactory, particularly given the recent rises in Screen Ireland's annual budget.

- It does not adequately reflect the quality and ambition of documentary making in Ireland as a form of film making that is hugely attractive to, and supported by, audiences.

- It is particularly restrictive that the documentary fund per project is max 150k and we think it would be worthwhile to look at this again.

02 **Put a Dedicated Documentary Project Manager in Place**

- The current Screen Ireland staff are too busy with feature drama and TV to give sufficient attention and expertise to the documentary form.

- A dedicated person will support and drive creative documentaries and their development and promotion in Ireland and abroad.

- This person will work on developing new strategies for documentary and will attend the festivals, markets and forums to help create new opportunities and develop invaluable international contacts in the industry.

03 **Reimagine a Strategy about Documentary Content**

- We are at a critical time in the industry. SDGI recommends SI create a vision for creative documentary.

- We don't believe this should be confined to documentaries that get a theatrical release and festival exposure.

- We want to explore how creative documentary television series could be supported.

- We want to discuss how SI can increase the currently low development support of feature documentaries.

- We need to consider how other forms of creative documentary can be supported by SI.

04 **Theatrical Window needs Flexibility**

- The current restrictions by SI on theatrical windows can cause problems, particularly when there is a co-production. There must be flexibility.

05 **Reimagine a Strategy about Documentary Content**

- A 'catalyst' programme for documentary directors, with support, would greatly help develop creative feature documentary directors.

- An annual short documentary film scheme is vital in order to encourage newer/younger documentary makers.